

March 15, 1960

MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT
March 11, 1960

Others present: General Norstad, General Goodpaster

General Norstad said, when he saw General de Gaulle in January following the President's discussion with de Gaulle in December, the meeting was a good one, and it seems to be having a good effect. General de Gaulle apparently had no conception of how much NATO really amounts to in providing a powerful defense. He said he would like to have an air defense scheme based on the same system as is applied to the United Kingdom. General Norstad has proceeded with the development of this; it will shortly be put before de Gaulle in specific written form, and there appears to be a good chance of reaching an agreed solution. As to the Navy, the French insist on keeping their fleet out of NATO. The proposal they advanced was no good at all, and General Norstad is keeping the pressure on them to come back with a more sensible proposal. There has been no progress on the atomic stockpiling project. It is clear that we did the right thing in pulling our air squadrons out of France. This action did a lot toward bringing the French to their senses, and there is a generally more healthy attitude developing.

The President asked whether General Norstad thought he should be in Washington while de Gaulle is here. General Norstad thought it would be better not to be here, but said he would send an estimate of the status of these problems to the President about a week ahead of de Gaulle's visit. He asked me to remind him concerning this.

General Norstad said he was much interested in Adenauer's visit and forthcoming discussions with the President, specifically on the matter of disarmament and possibilities for control and inspection. From a military standpoint he thought a system of

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control and inspection could be instituted covering a portion of West and Central Europe. This would utilize mobile inspection groups with total personnel coming to something like 1500. The techniques of the President's Open Skies proposal, using advanced photography, would be included. Also there would be overlapping radar nets, with Western radars located as far east as Poland, and Communist radars located in Western Germany. It is necessary to designate a specific area to which these techniques would be applied. He thought they could give effective inspection, which would let us know what is going on where that might have appreciable military significance. The system would give substantial relief from the danger of surprise surface attack which is very much on the minds of the Europeans, and could thereby reduce tensions without loss of security.

General Norstad thought that the minimum area for such a project should include Poland, Czechoslovakia, East and West Germany, Belgium, Holland and Denmark. We would have with the Russians joint inspection teams, with each party having the right to go anywhere in the area upon notification to see what is happening there.

The President thought that after such a system had been proved out it would be possible to do some thinning out. General Norstad thought the proposal is itself very attractive to the West and to the uncommitted countries. After twelve to eighteen months' experience with it, we could consider some thinning out. He said the Secretary of State, Mr. Eaton and the UK authorities are for it. Defense Minister Strauss of Germany personally said he would support it. Adenauer is the problem. Adenauer says it does not go far enough, stating that it should be applied to all of the Communist bloc and all of NATO. General Norstad thought, however, that Adenauer may be brought around to this, with the idea of having it taken up at the summit meeting rather than through the disarmament conference. He thought that the President should take this up with Adenauer, feeling that the President should be able to jar Adenauer. If this is done, others can follow up with other authorities. The reports from France are that the French technical authorities may oppose the proposal, and take a very tough line,

stating that any such scheme would lead toward neutralism. However, there is a report from Bonn that at the last meeting of Adenauer and de Gaulle, one of them talked about inspection within a limited area and there was some indication that the two were in agreement on this.

The President said the proposal seems to be one of picking an area, and establishing within it a common inspection system which is least objectionable in terms of the numbers of its participating personnel but gives an effective safeguard. There would be no reduction of forces until the system has been proved out. He thought Adenauer's first question would be to ask what would be the ratio of forces in East Germany to those in West Germany. General Norstad said that in the initial stage each side would announce its force levels and their locations, thus providing a "military blueprint." He said he had not discussed this matter specifically with the Belgians, the Dutch, or the Danes. He said it should be kept simple. However, it might be possible to add Alaska, Siberia and perhaps some of the northwest U. S.

The President asked if Mr. Eaton will be taking this up with the other members of the Western five of the disarmament group. General Norstad said he would not. However, Mr. Green of Canada is strong for the proposal, but has cautioned that it is best not to raise it at a low level. General Norstad said Mr. Herter is enthusiastic about the idea of the President talking to Adenauer about this. Adenauer has a great liking for the President and the United States, and he felt the President could convince Adenauer this system would in fact give better security.

The President said that security reasons are only part of the story. At the present time Adenauer is thinking almost wholly in terms of local politics in Germany. General Norstad agreed that for political reasons there must be areas included in the scheme additional to West Germany. Also, it should not be put forward as a way to reduce forces, but rather to give an added degree of security which will permit changes to be made in our forces. The President said the big value in his mind is that it would get a system of



inspection started. General Norstad suggested that with regard to detail, Adenauer could be advised to talk to General Norstad. The President said he would stress that this is a practical inspection scheme. If, after eighteen months, it is working well, then the West could see what next it might do. General Norstad thought the scheme might have as an incidental effect the bringing about of a better atmosphere regarding Berlin and Germany. The President thought the trouble with the scheme is that if Adenauer wants to interpret it as an indication that the Americans are getting weary of staying in Europe, he can and will do so. General Norstad advised stressing that it is a measure of added security, and recalled the President's dedication to European security -- specifically that he came to Europe to set up NATO, disrupting his personal life, in order to bring added security to that area.

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